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January 20th, 2022

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Room S-230, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Minority Leader McConnell,

I am writing today in response to your recent comment on voting rights in which you insinuated that African Americans are somehow not American citizens. This is 2022 and being American is not synonymous with looking or thinking like you. African Americans are, in fact, American citizens deserving of our recognition, respect, and equal protections under the law.

The United States was built on the backs of African Americans; despite this, we have overcome institutional obstacles and barriers to be successful, contributing, productive members of our nation. Your inability to recognize us as Americans is appalling and deeply disturbing.

There are more than 2.15 million African American veterans, who risked their lives to defend and protect your liberties and freedoms. Thousands of African American servicemembers are buried in Arlington National Cemetery. There are nearly 50,000 African American physicians across the nation, who have worked tirelessly on the frontlines during the pandemic to save lives and help stop the spread of COVID-19. There are 239,000 African American teachers educating our nation's children and helping shape the leaders of tomorrow. African Americans have filled important roles in hard-hit industries during the pandemic and have helped keep our economy afloat. Are they not American enough for you?

African Americans have been systematically disenfranchised for generations, and your comments are representative of the internalized racism and prejudice that our community continues to face today. For those sentiments to be expressed within the context of voting rights is especially concerning, as African Americans and other minority populations have been historically marginalized and shut out of our democratic processes.

African Americans fought and died for the right to vote in our country. They helped move our nation forward and demanded that the United States more fully live up to its creed that all men and women are created equal. We are now watching as that progress is being threatened by coordinated attempts to restrict and suppress voters' access to the ballot box – and African Americans stand to lose the most if the Senate does not act.

Your comments give greater insight into your motivations for opposing voting rights legislation, and they are prejudicial and morally reprehensible. The very fate and integrity of our democracy is at stake, and you have shown a complete disregard for the severity of the situation. Despite your indifference and world views, we will continue fighting to safeguard the sacred right to vote. America will find a path forward to pass the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act and the Freedom to Vote Act. Democracy will prevail; America will prevail and overcome.

Sincerely,



A. Donald McEachin
Member of Congress